

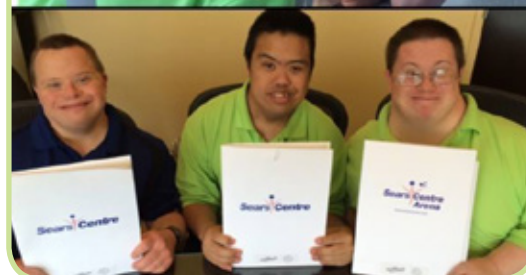
## Welcome the next generation of GiGi's Playhouse!!!

We welcomed so many new beginnings over the last several months. New families chose to believe and achieve!!! New volunteers joined the National Achievement Center for service projects and event support. New donors supported our demand for expanded programs, metrics, and training. New partners created job opportunities for our amazing adult interns. New playhouses in Hillsborough, NJ, Indianapolis, IN and Milwaukee, WI, Westchester, Layton UT, Phoenix AZ, El Paso TX joined the GiGi's Family!!!!

I'm still amazed when I hear families say things like "When GiGi's opened the door, a weight was lifted from my heart" and "All the steps, tools and skills we need to succeed are right here at GiGi's." 12 years ago I dreamed of a Playhouse for GiGi and her friends to learn, play, and believe. Today, we have 24 Playhouses open across the US and Mexico. We expect 30 by the end of the year and 40 by the end of 2016 - and then there's the 140+ inquiries too!!!!

Let's keep those welcomes coming. Visit your Playhouses and make more introductions. Take more tours! Volunteer at more events! And use your voice and your resources to change the world! We are always stronger together, and with EVERYONE's support, can we provide the best programs, best volunteer opportunities, and best opportunities to engage your communities. We will ALWAYS need your voices and we need them more than ever before.

Stay tuned for more achievement and more belief!!! XXOO  
-Nancy and GiGi



### Heroes Get It Done: More Jobs for GiGi's Interns!

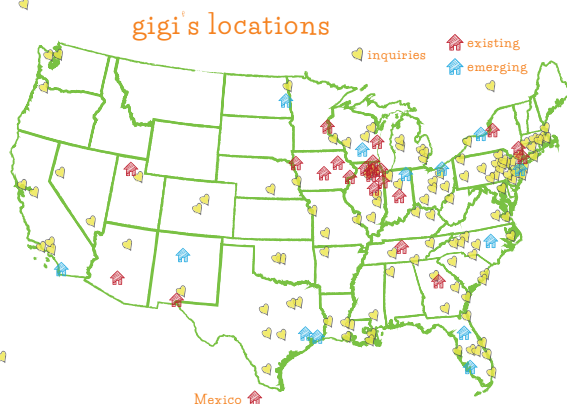
We are very grateful to the Sears Center, Ricky Rockets, the Schaumburg Library and our other community partners for their vision and courage to make a meaningful commitment to GiGi's Playhouse as a career partner. A HUGE congratulations to all of the interns who continue to give their Best of All as they embark on their new careers!!! The interns all learned critical job skills through their internship at Hugs & Mugs.

Interested in becoming a GiGi's Playhouse Career Partner? Please e-mail National Program Director Kenzi Huelskoetter at [khuelskoetter@gigisplayhouse.org](mailto:khuelskoetter@gigisplayhouse.org) for more information!!!



Anthony's mom brought Anthony and his brothers to LMNOP this summer. It was

their first time to the playhouse and she said "they felt so welcomed!" She said "it was like being met with a big hug when they walked in the doors."



Changing the way the world sees Down syndrome. one child. one diagnosis. one community at a time.



## Heroes BELIEVE: Kristen and Katelynn!

There are heroes among us every day. Children, adults, parents, siblings, volunteers, donors, and more. Here is one of their stories from the 2016 GiGi's Playhouse Calendar shoot:

*I believe that heroes don't always have capes or shiny armors; heroes are made by the paths they choose, not the powers they are graced with. I am always proud of the path that Katelynn*



*chooses; it's one of pride, courage, bravery and a relentless will to resist limitations. She has taught us that heroes are not the ones that never fail, but the special ones that get up again and again, never losing sight of their dreams.*

*Katelynn is our hero; she is a special girl that finds the strength to persevere and endure despite overwhelming obstacles. Her dare to dream, her will to succeed, her fight*

*to the finish line in all she does makes us believe heroes don't have capes or armors but a heart filled with love, a mind that challenges that status quo and an attitude that separates the dreamers and the achievers from the nonbelievers. Her unwavering commitment to be a continuous learner can save any day, any time, anywhere.*

When interviewed at the 2016 calendar shoot, Kristin was asked what Katelynn's message would be:

*Excellence is not a skill, it's an attitude. Choose Wisely...*

Love,  
Chris, Kristin, Katelynn and Kendall Malek

See our hero Katelynn and many other heroes in the 2016 GiGi's Playhouse Annual Calendar, debuting in September! Calendars will be available in our online store: [www.shopgigisplayhouse.org](http://www.shopgigisplayhouse.org).

## GiGi's Welcomes New NY Playhouse

We are thrilled to announce the opening of GiGi's Playhouse in Westchester County, NY. Serving families in New York and Connecticut, GiGi's Westchester has already hosted their first open play and busy bodies programs! Welcome to the GiGi's family!



## GiGi's To Appear on NY TV

GiGi's Playhouse was chosen to be featured on the American Graduate Day Special!! Nancy Gianni and NYC Playhouse parent Shevron Anderson were interviewed by Jane Pauly in New York city last week for a segment to air on October 3rd. American Graduate Day will show the country how important GiGi's Playhouse educational programs are to our families. We are honored to be a part of this important programming. Millions of people will view this program and learn of the GiGi's way! #GIGISBELIEVES



## Mark your calendars: GiGiFest 2015!!! Sunday, October 18th, 2015

Here at the National Achievement Center in Hoffman Estates, we celebrate National Down syndrome month in style. On October 18th, 2015 Calendar kids will be strutting their stuff down the red carpet while Hugs + Mugs Interns pass out gelato, brew up signature coffee drinks and of course, show off the newly remodeled store! GiGi Fest has activities for the entire family: music, petting zoos, bounce houses, food and of course, fun for everyone! Bring your family and friends to tour the



National Achievement Center, take a glimpse at GiGi University and see all the great programs we offer. Join us in celebrating our amazing volunteers, playhouse families, generous donors and members of our community!

## GiGiFest is looking for SPONSORS!

Please contact Mike at [mjostes@gigisplayhouse.org](mailto:mjostes@gigisplayhouse.org) for sponsor benefits!



# GiGi's Playhouse Gala i have a voice

**Save the Date!!!**

**2016 I Have a Voice Gala:**

Saturday, March 12, 2016

Drury Lane, Oakbrook IL

Gala is all about the party!!! Celebrate the many achievements of individuals with Down syndrome and support the incredible DEMAND for more playhouse programs and experiences!!!

## JOIN THE COMMITTEE!!!

Are you a party planner? Can you help secure silent auction items? Are you great with organizing volunteers? We need YOU!!! Please e-mail event manager Mike Jostes for information on the gala planning kickoff meeting in early September: [mjostes@gigisplayhouse.org](mailto:mjostes@gigisplayhouse.org).

## FUNDRAISE FOR GIGI'S PLAYHOUSE!!!

From Lemonade Stands to Water Bottle Teams and more: your family, school, or office can support the expenses of critical Playhouse programs so that cost is never a barrier to Playhouse families. Please e-mail event manager Mike Jostes for information: [mjostes@gigisplayhouse.org](mailto:mjostes@gigisplayhouse.org).



## New Playhouse Tutor Gives and Gets Back!!!

Kim Boundy is an elementary school teacher and a new volunteer tutor at GiGi's Playhouse. She shares a bit about her experience and the rewards of tutoring.



*"As an educator, it is extremely rewarding to see growth in children. It's a privilege to work with young minds and it fills me up when "the lightbulb goes off" and connections*

*are made. I have only been tutoring at GiGi's Playhouse since June, but the gains I have seen in my students is amazing. The support of the parents at GiGi's Playhouse is also phenomenal and, I believe, is the key to each child's progress. Giving back is something I truly believe in and the timing was right in my life to get involved in an amazing organization like GiGi's Playhouse. I hope to inspire other teachers that I work with to become a part of this wonderful place!"*

## Fall Tutoring Information!!!

Our Fall tutoring session runs from Monday, September 28th - Sunday, December 6th. The Literacy and Math Tutoring programs improve:

- Sight word recognition
- Articulation
- Vocabulary comprehension
- Number recognition
- Self-esteem
- Fine motor skills
- Literacy
- Math
- CONFIDENCE!!!



If you would like to participate as a student, volunteer as a tutor in our Fall tutoring session please contact the National Achievement Center at 847.885.7529! Like all programs at GiGi's Playhouse, Literacy Tutoring is offered to families at no charge!



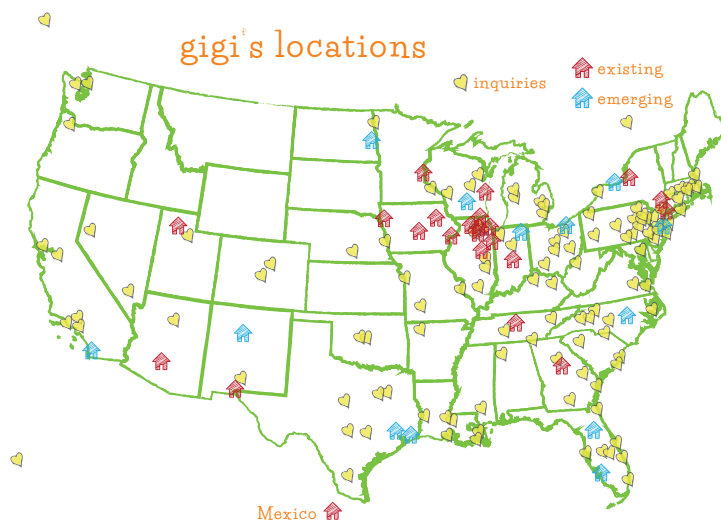
## Making More Dreams Come True

Parents often share that GiGi’s Playhouse enabled them, and members of their community, to dream of a better future for their child:

- “When GiGi’s opened the door, a weight was lifted from my heart.”
- “All the steps, tools and skills we need to succeed are right here at GiGi’s.”
- “At GiGi’s there is high accountability for parents and children – this helps ensure they will be treated the same as others down the road.”

Today, 147 communities across North America are asking for a GiGi’s Playhouse to help them shape the future for their loved ones with Down syndrome. A better future for individuals with Down syndrome must include social change in addition to developing self-confidence and various skills. GiGi’s Playhouse will always serve and support our families through no-fee programs, and we know that stronger and expanded programs, better training tools for volunteers, and next-generation marketing resources will allow us to meet this demand. As importantly, we must always stand tall and use our loudest voices to champion global acceptance. Changing perceptions and creating opportunities that support individuals’ abilities to secure meaningful employment opportunities, live independently, and be treated with dignity are essential for sustained success and true social change. Changing societal perceptions for generations to come takes a movement!

GiGi’s Playhouse can maximize its impact in each and every community we serve, both today and in the future, with your continued support. You can make a difference, and help more individuals with Down syndrome achieve and believe!!! Thank YOU for believing in us!



Changing the way the world sees Down syndrome. one child. one diagnosis. one community at a time.



## Help us continue to support individuals with Down syndrome

I want to help:

- \$25
- \$50
- \$75
- \$100
- \$250
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

I want my gift to support:

- Literacy and Math Tutoring
- Therapeutic Programs
- GiGi University and Hugs + Mugs
- New Program Development
- Greatest Area of Need

My donation is made:

- As a General Donation
- In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_
- In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

I want to join the **\$21 for 21** club (monthly \$21 giving):

- Yes  No

I am donating by:  Check  Credit Card

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



Save money on printing and postage:  
 donate ONLINE at [gigisplayhouse.org](http://gigisplayhouse.org)  
 donate monthly at: [gigisplayhouse.org](http://gigisplayhouse.org)



## THANK YOU: 2015 CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION CHAMPION DONORS!!!

Accelerated Rehabilitation Services  
Accurate Personnel  
Amina Grace Cullen Memorial Fund  
Barrington Area Community Foundation  
Chicago Cubs  
Chicago Service Club  
Inland Bank and Trust  
Jan Halsey Events  
Jewish Federation of Chicago  
Patterson Medial Foundation  
Rotary of Schaumburg-Hoffman  
Schwab Charitable Fund  
Select Rehabilitation, Inc.  
The Coleman Foundation  
Wi-Tronix

## "Best of All" Water Bottle Campaign

### When you use a GiGi's Playhouse water bottle – SMILE!!!

With every purchase of a GiGi's Playhouse water bottle, you are contributing to the GiGi University and career training programs. You are helping adults with Down syndrome improve their physical fitness and healthy eating commitments. You are helping our amazing interns learn key job skills needed to secure meaningful employment opportunities.

All GiGi's Playhouse water bottles include your COMPANY LOGO as well as an inspirational message from one of our adult interns. Water bottles are a PERFECT GIFT OR GIVEAWAY for clients, customers, vendors, family members, friends, and more!

Orders can be placed in quantities of 30, 60 or 120. As an example of the impact your donation can make, an order of 60 water bottles for \$1,000 will cover the cost of an entire program session for one GiGi University student.

For more information or to place an order, please call Mike at 847-807-4182 or email MJostes@gigisplayhouse.org



## Volunteers bring BELIEF to Playhouse Programs and Families

GiGi's Playhouse is fortunate to have the commitment from volunteer program leaders who help to facilitate the educational and therapeutic programs provided at no cost to participants and their families. Dr. Victoria Jay, LMNOP volunteer program leader, is a special gift to GiGi's Playhouse. Dr. Jay is the clinical director of the Elmhurst College Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic. She teaches language disorders in children, practicum classes and also is a clinical supervisor. In leading the LMNOP program, Dr. Jay involves graduate students who are fulfilling their clinical placement requirements. Together, they are responsible for fostering the LMNOP participant's language and communication through sign language, song and play.

*"When Dr. Jay, began as the program leader for LMNOP, she added a fresh, new dimension that has really fine-tuned what the program offers to our little ones. Dr. Jay has three students actively engaging with our kids at all times. And that makes a big difference when attention spans tend to wander. She has really polished the dynamics of this program into a fine gem. She has taken something we have always loved and made it spectacular! And, at the end of each session, Dr. Jay offers a printout with illustrations so we can take it home and review on our own the signs we learned that day. It's truly amazing to see how Nathan has grown through this program. He is now one of the older kids attending but, we love it so much, we can't help but keep coming back to it each week! Thank you Dr. Jay and THANK YOU, GiGi's, for being such an active part of our family!"*

- Paula Akinola, LMNOP parent participant

LMNOP is offered every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. please call 847-885-7529 or e-mail info@gigisplayhouse.org.

## BE THE CHANGE: GiGi's Playhouse MISSION PARTNERS!!!

As a mission partner, your engagement and benefits will include event sponsorships, volunteer projects, custom branded merchandise created in our career training program, and more. Your company will also benefit from considerable exposure through GiGi's Playhouse web site(s), social media platforms, special events, press releases, special awards, and more. For more information about mission partnerships, please contact National Director of Marketing Marc Portugal at mportugal@gigisplayhouse.org.



Down Syndrome Achievement Centers  
 2350 West Higgins Road  
 Hoffman Estates, IL 60169

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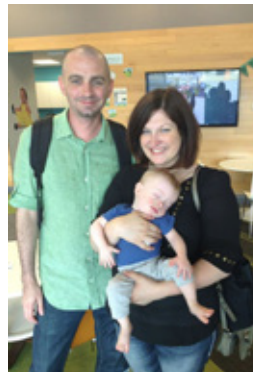
#gigibelieves

2016 Calendar  
 Debuting Early Fall!

One family shares their thoughts on new hero Sarah Buti, GiGi's new Speech and Language Pathologist, and the Amina Grace Speech and Language program:

*"I was so happy that there is now going to be a focus on communication because it is such an important part of every child's future. Every single bit of help is huge for the progression of life for our kids. It's so appreciated."*

*"It has already been such a positive experience. Everything that you have presented has been in such a positive manner. I, as a parent, appreciate that you have made an attempt to make it so convenient for me and that you are attaching it to an existing program. Thanks so much to Maura, Munawar and GiGi's for all that has been done, it is so appreciated."*



**Three new families joined the GiGi's family this week at the Hoffman location alone!**

It is not easy to walk through the Playhouse doors for the first time. It is very scary to take on a diagnosis but as these families learned, GiGi's is there for you every step of the way! As one family said at their visit this week "I told my church I was coming here for the first time and asked our prayer group to pray for me. I thought I was going to leave here crying. Instead, I cannot wait to come back!" Another family came back the next day with their extended family!

We feel blessed and honored to be there for these families at such a critical time in their lives. #WEGOTYOURBACK